UNITED STATES KARATE ALLIANCE

BUSHIDO BULLETIN

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Directors: James H. Hawkes & Dr. David Jordan

CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT 2002 NATIONALS

By Rick Nathanson, 7th Dan

Only two of last year's grand champions repeated their feat at the 2002 United States Karate Alliance Nationals, held in Albuquerque in April.

Guy Holtzman won his seventh title for Black Belt Men Kata — his fifth in a row. Richard Poage took home the title for Junior Weapons.

More than 500 competitors and 1,500 spectators filled the Crowne Plaza Pyramid Hotel during the three-day event, which included seminars conducted by martial arts luminaries Fumio Demura, Bruce and Anne-Marie Heilman, and seven-time National's kumite grand champion John Pat Bullock.

In addition to Mr. Holtzman and Mr. Poage, grand champion Alliance Cup trophies were won by Jeff Crothers, Donnie Michael, Gabrielle Garner, Rosa Mota, Brandon DeHart, Frank Castillo, and Tara Jalali.

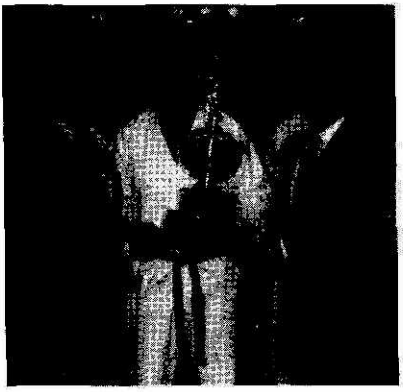
Mr. Holtzman, a Matsumura Seito stylist, won for his performance of "Hakutsuru," a White Crane form that imitates the graceful bird while feeding. Mr. Holtzman learned the kata from Shogun Roy Oyakawa. The form, he said, "takes the art to a different level." Most katas, regardless of the style, either come from or have some White Crane influence in them, he said.

Mr. Holtzman operates the Palm Springs Karate Academy in Palm Springs, Calif. He trains under John Hutchcroft, Philip Koeppel and Roy Oyakawa.

Sixteen-year-old high school sophomore Richard Poage of Arizona took top honors for his rendition of "Oyata Kihon No Eiku," the same oar kata that won him the top spot at last year's Nationals. Mr. Poage learned the kata from his former instructor, Mike Wall. He currently trains under Chris Hoshiyama, with

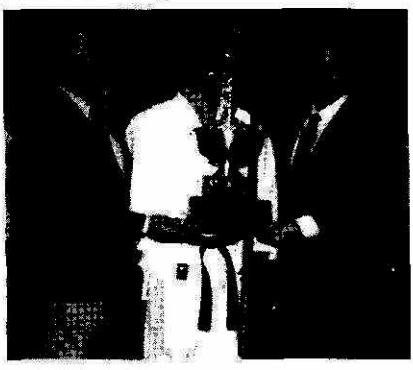
whom he recently opened a dojo in Scottsdale.

Nationals proved to be a busy but productive weekend for Mr. Poage, who also won first place in his division in kata and koshiki, and second place in kumite and team kata.



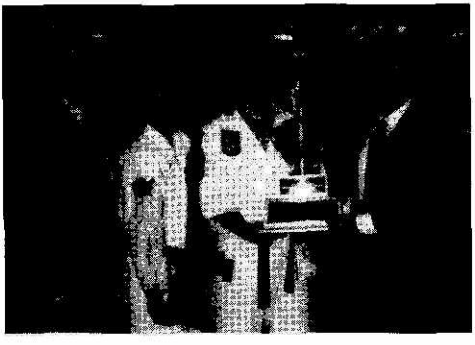
Guy Holtzman

One of the most closely watched fights was for the Men's Black Belt Kumite Grand Champion, which was won by Jeff Crothers of California.



Richard Poage

Seven-time Nationals kumite winner, Louisiana's John Pat Bullock, decided not to compete in the event this year and instead served as the center referee for the final matches.



Jeff Crothers

Mr. Crothers first match was with Eddie Bethea of Indiana. Mr. Crothers prevailed with a final score of 3-2.

"I never fought him before. It was very intense," Mr. Crothers said. "He's been a guy I've looked up to for all the years I've been running with USKA. I used my sidekick a little bit and my reverse punch. I was trying to get in there as fast as I could and then get out as fast as I could. Mr. Bethea is really a tough defensive fighter, and I had to work to bring him out from that."

For the next match, Mr. Crothers was paired with Buster Cotten of Louisiana, over whom he won 4-3. It was the second time the two had met in the ring; the first time was at the last USKA World Championships.

"He beat me and I was really intimidated by him," Mr. Crothers said. "I was just backing away and not really defending. This time, I was still backing away, but as I

backed away I was throwing techniques — backfists, I think."

The final match was against New Mexico's Richard Long. Mr. Crothers won with a final score of 5-1. "I fought him once before in team fighting at the last World Championships," he recalled. "I lost to him there. This time, I was a little clearer of mind and I used my speed. He's much taller than I am and he has really good hand speed, so I just tried to get in and out as fast as I could. I scored mainly with reverse punches."

Gabrielle Garner

Mr. Crothers, 20, a Keichi-Do student of Karl Marx, has been studying martial arts for 14 years. He currently operates his own school in Carlsbad, Calif., and plans to attend college to obtain a business degree.

In the Women's Black Belt Kumite finals, Gabrielle Garner of Louisiana won the title by beating returning grand champion Anna Chalamidas of New Mexico, and by beating her own dojo mate Sandy Cheung

"It's always hard fighting your teammate," said Ms. Garner, 20. "We spar at the karate school and we have similar fighting styles. I usually throw a lot of sidekicks, but I switched in my fight with her and used my backhand a lot and that might have messed her up."

In the fight with Ms. Chalamidas, a taller opponent, "I tried to close the gap with a kick and then get inside of her legs with as many punches as I could. It seemed to work pretty well. Toward the end of the fight I think she caught me with a lunge punch or a backfist. Whatever it was, she definitely nailed me."

Ms. Chalamidas was disqualified for drawing blood and Ms. Garner was awarded the grand champion trophy.

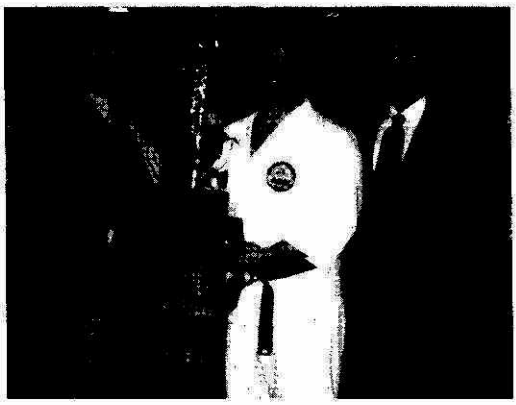
"I don't think she ran into it," lamented Ms. Chalamidas. "I think I got a little carried away. It was my first match and I think that might have had something to do with it. I was way too fired up. But she's a very good fighter."

Ms. Garner has trained under Joe Dupaquier since she was 9 years old. She currently attends Denison University in Ohio. It is her first grand champion win at Nationals.

"It's definitely very exciting, especially since I've been away at school and haven't been

training as much as I do during the summers," she said. "The competition was tough. Those girls have a lot of heart and it takes a lot to be out there."

Indiana's Donnie Michael took home his first Grand Champion in Kobudo from Nationals, but the kata he performed, Kako No Kon, has already taken him to the winners' circle for the past two years at the World Championships.



Donnie Michael

"The kata was created by my Sensei, Mr. Bethea, and is a combination of a few weapons katas," he explained. "I watched Sensei run it for a long time when I was a kyu rank and I couldn't wait until he'd teach it to me. He made me wait a long time, so it's a real honor for me to win with it, and it's another way for me to honor my Sensei."

Mr. Michael, a Shorin Ryu/ Shorin Kan stylist, said the kata particularly appeals to him because it fits his body, and the transitions from stance to stance are comfortable and natural. "Sensei has modified the kata throughout the years and it looks a little bit different than the way I used to see him run it," he said. "He's allowed me to make a few modifications so it better fits my body and the way I move. It's really worked out well for me."

Among those modifications is a large "baseball swing" at the end of the kata, " which I really enjoy doing and is a highlight for me."

For the past six years, Mr. Michael has operated his own karate school, Kicks Inc., in Kokomo, Ind.

The Alliance Cup trophy for Youth Beginning Kata was won by Rosa Mota, 14, of Ontario, Calif. A Ten Chi Kenpo stylist, Ms. Mota performed "Wahlum," a Praying Mantis form that Ms. Mota describes as "soft and flowing, with a little bit of hard in it." She particularly likes a jumping front kick in the kata because "it grabs everybody's attention."

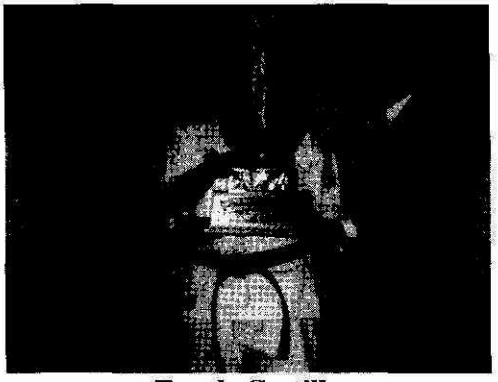
The eighth-grade student has been studying about one year under her instructor, Norman Armstrong, and she has earned her yellow belt. Nationals was only her third tournament.

Another person who had luck with the kata "Wahlum" was Frank Castillo, who also learned

the form from Mr. Armstrong. Castillo, 30, won the Adult Kyu Grand Champion Kata.

Rosa Mota

"I love that it's a Praying Mantis form and that it's thousands of years old. The history is very important to me," he said. "I honestly believe that in some other lifetime I was doing martial arts and performing this form. I honestly believe I was just waiting for somebody to open the door so I could pop back out, and it was Mr. Armstrong who opened the door for me."



Frank Castillo

Mr. Castillo said that when he practices the Praying Mantis form, he tries to let "the spirit of the praying mantis" guide him and take over. "From the first move, even if you've never seen me before and you don't know what I'm doing, you know that you're looking at a praying mantis, without a doubt." The mindset must work for him.

Mr. Castillo has won his kata division at numerous tournaments using this same form, and is a California state champion.

Mr. Castillo, who's hobby used to be break dancing, has been studying martial arts for six years and he says without hesitation that "martial arts has changed my life." He now trains under his brother, Jack Castillo, and together they operate their own school.

Brandon DeHart, 20, the Grand Champion Adult Kyu Weapons winner, performed Bo Form 1. "I like it because I'm able to throw power in it and I like the stances," he said. The kata has an abundance of front and side stances, which he said are his favorites.

Mr. DeHart, who holds a purple belt, has been studying Tae Kwon Do under Toby Sinclair in Cotton Valley, La., for the last two years. During this time he has

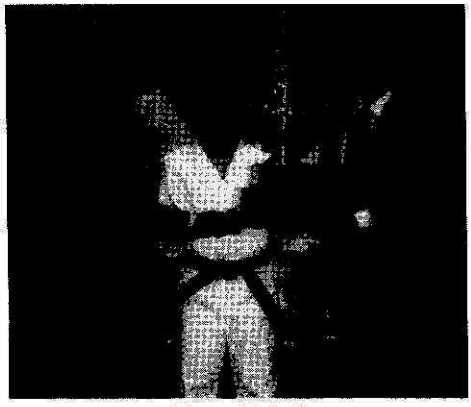
competed in about 25 tournaments. Last year at World Championships and at Nationals he won his division in kumite.

His teacher, Mr. Sinclair, was watching Mr. DeHart's performance at this year's Nationals and had only praise for him. "He's the standout student at the school, and I don't think any of the other students would take issue with that. He's a quick study and he works hard and strives for perfection."

Brandon DeHart

Mr. DeHart is a student at Louisiana Vocational Institute where he is studying instrumentation.

If positive attitude could be bottled, 17-year-old Tara Jalali would be a millionaire. In the meantime, she'll have to settle for being the Youth Advanced Kata Grand Champion. She performed "Anaku Ni," which she likes "because it's a strong kata," she said. "It has one kick, a side kick, that just gets into the judges' faces. It's a great one to stick out there."



Tara Jalali

Ms. Jalali has been studying Shorin Ryu for eight years under Tim VanDenover in Arizona. "I just went into Nationals confident, because if you have a bad attitude and go into something, no matter what it is, you don't have a chance of being a winner. I just went in there with a good attitude and tried my hardest and figured whatever happens, happens. I was not going to let what anybody else was doing affect my mind."

Ms. Jalali, currently a junior at Horizon High School in Phoenix, hopes to eventually attend law school. And, she said, she has her sights set on Harvard. "I'm going to try my hardest to get in there. I'm taking the same approach and attitude that I have when I get into the ring for competition."

JAMES LEE: FROM SNOW BUM TO SENSEI

By Rick Nathanson, 7th Dan

About 10 years ago, James Lee decided to take a break from college and karate in Louisiana and travel around to see some of America's purple mountain majesties and fruited plains.

While traveling through Vail, Colo., a friend gave him a snowboard. Although Mr. Lee had never before been on a snowboard, or skis, for that matter, he gave it a shot and found that he had a natural affinity for it.

"I just fell in love with it and with the mountains and the feeling of freedom," he says. "I got good enough that I was doing extreme snowboarding — back country and high avalanche danger terrain, which has the deepest snow, the steepest mountain and the biggest cliffs."

Mr. Lee's initial "passing through" travel mode shifted gears, and he decided to linger a bit longer in Vail. He took a job as a restaurant cook in the evenings, which allowed him to snowboard during the days. He didn't forget about karate either. A brown belt when he left Louisiana, he continued training on his own as time allowed.

Before he knew it, four years had passed and Mr. Lee began to have a vision for his future that included the two things he enjoyed most — karate and snowboarding.

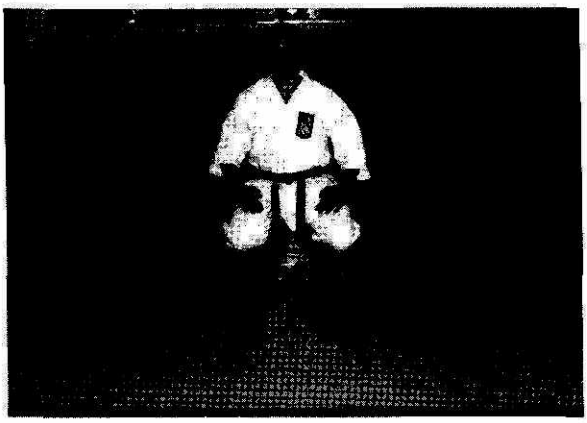
"My dream was to go back to Louisiana to train with my sensei, Joe Dupaquier, and get my shodan," Mr. Lee says. "Then I would move back to the Vail area and open a karate school and live the life of snowboarding every day and teaching karate every night."

Mr. Lee realized his dream, but not exactly in the way he envisioned. He did get his black belt in Tae Kwon Do and return to Colorado in 1998, and he did open his own dojo. But with more than 140 students, he became a victim of his own success. He also recently became a father and is in the process of buying a home. All this leaves little time for snowboarding, he says.

"This last winter, I went snowboarding two days, compared to the four years I lived here before and went snowboarding no less than 100 days each season."

In January, he opened "James Lee's Karate School of Champions," drawing students from Vail and the surrounding communities. Many of the students were with him when he was teaching at a health club in Vail, an after-school program in Edwards, 15 miles west of Vail, and a dance studio in Eagle, 15 miles west of Edwards.

Because Vail is largely an expensive tourist town with a transient population, Mr. Lee opted to open his 1,500-square-foot dojo in the more family-oriented community of Eagle, population 6,500. About 75 percent of his students are under the age of 15. He teaches classes five days each week.



James Lee

Mr. Lee, now a nidan, was recently named the United States Karate Alliance's Colorado State Representative. In this position, he hopes to bring more Colorado karate schools under the umbrella of the USKA. He has begun networking with the Western Colorado Karate League, a small state organization consisting of about a dozen schools. The League, he says, has supported his Alliance-sanctioned tournaments and has begun using USKA rules for its own tournaments. The League also appointed Mr. Lee as its chief referee.

"They are very impressed with the USKA quality standards and rules, and I believe they will be receptive to the idea of Alliance school affiliation," he says.

Because of the financial obligations of running his own school, Mr. Lee has been unable to travel extensively and chase points on the tournament circuit. He is, nevertheless, a formidable competitor at those tournaments he does attend, including the USKA 2002 Nationals held in Albuquerque, to which he brought 25 of his students ranging in age from 4 to 40.

At that tournament, Mr. Lee won second place in his fighting division and fourth place in kata. At the 2001 Nationals he took third place in kata and second place in kumite. At the 2001 World Championships in New Orleans, he won third places in both kata and kumite, and at the 2001 Southwest Regionals in Albuquerque he won Grand Champion Kumite.

One of Mr. Lee's tournament katas is "Sepai," an Okinawan Goju Ryu kata that he learned from USKA tournament veteran Steve Wilson, who moved to Eagle, Colo., several years ago to work for the local water company. Mr. Wilson has a select handful of Goju Ryu students in

Eagle. He now teaches them out of Mr. Lee's dojo two nights a week.

"I really enjoy performing 'Sepai' because I like the flow of the kata," Mr. Lee explains. "It's hard and then soft; very fast and then slow. It's not real flashy, but I can feel it. It just fits my body type and my emotions, and when I run the kata I can make it come to life."

And Mr. Lee has done a pretty good job thus far of making his dreams come to life as well. "I am living my dream," he states. "I'm living in the mountains, I'm teaching karate, the school is very successful and I'm really, really busy. I guess that's a good thing, but I'd sure like to get more snowboard time in."

He reflects a moment as reality intrudes once again upon his dreams: "Of course," he says, laughing, "snowboarding doesn't pay the bills."

2002 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2002 World Championships are shaping up to be a world-class event. Martial artists across the United States and many countries around the world are preparing for the USKA World Championships in New Orleans, Louisiana. They will be held August 1-4, 2002 at the Radisson Hotel New Orleans on Canal Street.

The World Championship Flyers are now prepared and are in the mail. If you have not received yours, please call headquarters to request one, and verify your mailing address. There may be some confusion in the flyer regarding Grappling, as it was going to be cancelled. But due to the overwhelming demand, Grappling will be held at the 2002 World Championships.

Make your hotel reservations now to secure our special rates for the World Championships. Call toll free to 1-800-333-3333 between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm or call 1-504-522-4500 and be sure to mention the United States Karate Alliance World Championships in order to receive your special rate.

Southwest Airlines is offering a 10% discount on most of its already low fares, for travel to and from the 2002 United States Karate Alliance World Championships. You or your travel agent may call the Southwest Airlines Group and Meetings Reservations at 1-800-433-5368 and reference ID Code J6191.

Reservations Sales Agents are available 7:00 am – 8:00 pm Monday – Friday, or 8:30 am – 5:30 pm Saturday and Sunday, Central Standard Time. You must make your reservations five or more days prior to travel to take advantage of this offer.

Alamo Rent A Car has been selected as the official car rental company for the World Championships. To receive Alamo's special World Championship group rates, call their 24-hour reservation number, 1-800-732-3232 and request Group ID # 594221 and Plan Code GR.

The National Bushido Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, August 3rd, at 7:30 pm in the Tulane Ballroom at the Radisson Hotel. The awards banquet provides the opportunity to recognize the top ten nationally ranked competitors in tournament competition sanctioned by the United States Karate Alliance. Please be sure to purchase your banquet tickets along with your World Pre-Registration as there are a limited number of seats available.

Register for the 2002 USKA World Championships by July 19th, and receive a free admission ticket to the Finals and placement in kata presentation order after those that register at the door. Seeded competitors must pre-register in order to receive their seed.

The point standings for the 2002 USKA National Point Year, May 7, 2001 through May 6, 2002, will be available on our web site later in June and then in the July *Bushido Bulletin*.

Look in the next issue of the *Bushido Bulletin* for an article telling about the defending World Champions, John Pat Bullock - Black Belt Kata and Kumite, Teresa Davies – Black Belt Kumite, Donnie Michael – Black Belt Weapons. Keep your eye out for them at the World Championship Finals! And we look forward to seeing You at the World Championships!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You:

James H. Hawkes and Dr. David Jordan, co-directors of the United States Karate Alliance, wish to thank everyone who attended, participated, and helped to make the 2002 Nationals such a great success. We'd like to thank all the coordinators, officials, referees, judges, score keepers, time keepers, registrars, assistants, and numerous other volunteers who helped make this a smooth running tournament. Thank you for giving of your time and

expertise. With everyone's effort, this was the best Nationals yet!

Sympathy:
We'd like to extend our deepest sympathy to Eddie Bethea, Jr., whose mother recently passed away. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Mr. Bethea and his family. Condolences may be sent to 119 W. Sycamore, Kokomo, IN 46901.

Lifetime Memberships:
Lifetime memberships are available for only $300.00. The number of Lifetime membership patches you'll see is increasing. You too may have freedom from yearly renewals. You may download an application from our web site, or call headquarters to request one. Apply for your Alliance Lifetime Membership now!

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Rules & Referee Seminar and Score Keepers & Time Keepers Seminar:
The next Rules & Referee and Score Keepers & Time Keepers Seminar for certification will be August 1st from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Radisson Hotel New Orleans.

Hall of Fame Meeting:
The next Hall of Fame meeting will be held at 8:00 pm on Friday, August 2, 2002, during the Alliance World Championships

Reminder:
Alliance Judges & Referees: Please remember to wear a traditional martial arts uniform, or a white shirt, light gray trousers, and navy blazer when officiating.

Nationals Points:
The National Points (included in this bulletin) will be posted later this month on our web site for the tournaments from May 7, 2001 thru April 10, 2002. The National Points for the tournaments from May 7, 2001 thru May 6, 2002 will be posted on our web site later in June, and will be included in the July *Bushido Bulletin*.

Trias Memorial Award:
The Trias Memorial Award will be presented at the 2002 World Championship National Bushido Awards Banquet August 3rd.

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